Re-evaluation Note REV2010-10

Soil Fumigants Proposed Mitigation Measures

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Proposal for Implementation of Mitigation Measures for the Soil Fumigant Cluster

Background

The soil fumigant cluster includes chloropicrin, dazomet, metam sodium and metam potassium which are active ingredients under re-evaluation by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). The purpose of this document is to notify registrants, pesticide regulatory officials, and the Canadian public of the re-evaluation status and the proposed mitigation measures for the pesticide products containing these active ingredients.

Soil fumigants are used to control soil pests or pathogens such as insects, nematodes, bacteria, fungi and weeds, which can disrupt plant growth and production. A fumigant is a volatile chemical that becomes a gas at relatively low temperatures (for example, chloropicrin), or a chemical that reacts to form a gas (for example: dazomet, metam sodium and metam potassium are converted to the active form, methyl isothiocyanate or MITC). In Canada, chloropicrin, dazomet, metam sodium and metam potassium are registered as pre-plant soil fumigants for use on a variety of terrestrial and/or greenhouse food/feed and non-food/non-feed crops, forests/woodlots, ornamentals, nurseries, seed beds and/or turf. The fumigants are applied and incorporated into the soil, sealed and then aerated prior to planting. These active ingredients are also registered as antimicrobials, either as remedial wood preservatives (for example, structural timber) or as preservatives in industrial process fluids (for example, pulp and paper mills, water cooling towers). All currently registered uses are considered in the re-evaluation.

Regulatory Strategy

The PMRA is proposing implementation of measures to further limit user exposure and to further protect bystanders and the environment. The implementation of these measures is considered a first step in the re-evaluation of the Canadian uses of the products containing these active ingredients.

The measures are consistent with measures adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in their Re-registration Eligibility Decision (RED) documents (2008) and Amended RED documents (2009) for chloropicrin, dazomet and metam sodium/metam potassium (including MITC), as well as the USEPA Fumigant Management Plans and Postapplication Summary Reports Fact Sheet (2010). The PMRA is aware that the USEPA assessment of chloropicrin, dazomet and metam sodium/metam potassium is ongoing, and may re-assess the soil fumigant cluster as required.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

Registrants are required to develop, in consultation with the PMRA, a product stewardship program for the soil fumigant uses of chloropicrin, dazomet, metam sodium and metam potassium. A key component of the stewardship program is the development of a Fumigation Management Plan guidance document. It is proposed that this Fumigation Management Plan guidance document be part of an applicator's manual distributed with the products. The PMRA is also requiring chemical-specific mitigation measures for all registered uses. Fumigation Management Plan requirements and label amendments for end-use products containing chloropicrin, dazomet, metam sodium and metam potassium are provided in separate documents. Please refer to the Re-evaluation Notes for chloropicrin (REV2010-12), dazomet (REV2010-13) and metam sodium/metam potassium (REV2010-09). These documents are available through the Pest Management Information Service.

Supporting Documentation

PMRA documents are available through the Pest Management Information Service, phone: 1-800-267-6315 within Canada or 1-613-736-3799 outside Canada (long distance charges apply); fax 613-7[illegible]-3798; e-mail pmra.infoserv@hc-sc.gc.ca.

The USEPA RED documents for chloropicrin, dazomet and metam sodium/potassium are available on the Office of Pesticide Programs' website at www.epa.gov/pesticides/reregistration.

Next steps

The PMRA will accept written comments on this proposal up to 60 days from the date of publication of this document. Please forward all comments to Publications (please see contact information indicated on the cover page of this document). The PMRA will consider all comments received from the public in response to this consultation document, and will then publish a follow-up document which will include implementation details.